

**To:** Distefano, Nichole[DiStefano.Nichole@epa.gov]  
**From:** POLITICO Pro Whiteboard  
**Sent:** Thur 1/16/2014 9:09:40 PM  
**Subject:** Democrats press for data on WV chemical

1/16/14 4:08 PM EST

House Energy and Commerce Committee Democrats called on the company that manufactured the chemical that spilled into a West Virginia river last week to release information on its health and environmental effects.

In a letter Thursday to Eastman Chemical Company CEO Mark Costa, the lawmakers request that the company “immediately provide us with copies of any and all studies about the potential health and environmental effects of exposure to and releases of MCHM and to make appropriately redacted copies available to the public.”

The chemical, 4-methylcyclohexane or MCHM, is one of about 60,000 that were grandfathered in when Congress passed the nation’s landmark chemical safety law in 1976. That means no requirements exist that agencies prove the chemicals are or are not.

State officials began lifting the ban on drinking the water this week for many of the 300,000 people affected after the Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommended a safety standard of one part per million. After the ban was lifted in some areas, the CDC suggested to state officials Wednesday that pregnant women should not drink the water until there are no detectable levels of the chemical, noting that the agency was reviewing additional studies. The seemingly conflicting information has set off a wave of panic in the state.

“Given this chain of events and the dearth of scientific study of MCHM, West Virginians are justifiably concerned about whether their water is truly safe for consumption and use. The public, including independent scientists, deserve to have access to the studies that government officials are using to establish and modify these safety thresholds,” the letter said, asking for the information by the close of business on Friday.

Thursday’s letter was sent by Rep. Henry Waxman, the top Democrat on the committee, and Rep. Paul Tonko, the top Democrat on the panel’s Environment and the Economy Subcommittee.

— *Andrew Restuccia*

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